

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS



THE DIALOGUE

...Unique Contribution to Democracy

The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions is an independent educational institution devoted to continuing examination of basic issues confronting a democratic society.

- Its corporate entity is conducted by The Fund for the Republic, Inc., a non-profit corporation.
- Its location is atop Eucalyptus Hill, overlooking the Pacific Ocean, in Santa Barbara, California.
- Its prejudice is democracy.
- Its objective is clarification, not necessarily settlement, of issues.
- Its output is publication and broadcast of the most stimulating thoughts it generates.

Its method is the dialogue.

And it is the dialogue which is the Center's unique contribution to democracy.

Under the leadership of Robert M. Hutchins, former President of the University of Chicago, a small but influential intellectual community at the Center is attempting something not being done

anywhere else in America—not by any university, corporation, religious institution, labor organization or government agency. This unusual group of resident scholars is enriched by an intermittent procession of visiting experts from all over the world. Together, through the dialogue, they examine the major institutions of the 20th century—in the light of their impact upon the possibilities for the continued existence of democracy and in the light of the impact of a changing society upon those institutions.

Many viewpoints are represented in the output of the Center, but the Center adopts none as its own. Nor does the Center seek consensus or unanimity in its publications and audio tapes. It produces materials which promise to add new dimensions to the general discussion—not restatements of conventional wisdom. Each staff member speaks his personal point of view. The Center is responsible for determining that the material it produces should be presented to the public as a contribution to the dialogue about a Free Society.

Materials produced and distributed by the Center symbolize the basic commitment of the organization to the elements of the dialogue as the main instrument and vehicle of self-rule. These materials also signify the conviction of the Center that democratic



of the Center's permanent consultants, published 17 books dealing with various aspects of the trade union movement. This material generated by the Center is recognized as a primary basis for contemporary discussion of trade union problems in the United States.

"In just a few years," said President Hutchins, "the Center has become a national and international force, not because it is meritorious but because it is unique. It is doing something that needed to be done but that people didn't know needed to be done until it was done. When it was done, a surprising number of people said, 'Well, that was what we needed.'"

THE DIALOGUE AND THE FUTURE

Although the Center, through the dialogue, has been responsible for widening the circles of discussion and the subsequent influences upon public policy, its primary concern is not with immediate results.

Rather, it looks first to the future.

Those who participate in the Center dialogue believe the future is too important to be left to tomorrow. They are convinced that somewhere in the hurried, pressured, distracted life of contemporary America, caught up as it is with the demands of the urgent at the expense of the important, there must be a place where rational men give thoughtful, measured and sustained attention to tomorrow.

The Center is such a place. With dialogue as its method, this is what gives the Center its unique value to the democratic society.

Recently, a friend of the Center who is equally at home on Wall Street and on Eucalyptus Hill remarked:

"The first thing people with a real stake in this country ask when things begin to go wrong is, 'Who's thinking?'"

The Center staff was thinking—and arguing—and thinking again—about some of today's biggest problems when those problems were still too far in the future to concern most busy people.

THE DIALOGUE AND INDEPENDENCE

Through the dialogue, the Center continues to address its talents to the issues of today and tomorrow because thousands upon thousands of individual Americans care enough *today* to support the Center through their memberships.

At the Center it is possible to examine critically even the most acutely controversial issue or institution, because the Center is dependent for its financial support only upon those thousands of

individuals—its members—who believe the Center's contribution to democracy is as vital as it is unique.

This unique program started with a single grant from the Ford Foundation. That grant has expired and there no longer is any association, financial or legal, with the Ford Foundation.

Now, the Center is supported by a membership of tens of thousands of individuals who contribute from \$10 to \$1,000 or more a year. And the list is growing.

As expected, these members come from every walk of life and represent a wide range of outlooks. They all have one thing in common, however: an abiding interest in the best thinking available on the basic issues facing a democratic society.

This sort of broad-based individual support of the Center enables it to function as an independent social critic. The Center is "owned" by no one, and is beholden to no special interests.

President Hutchins once observed that "a university can take care of itself financially without much trouble because it renders services the community believes it cannot do without. But the Center, above all, has to be an independent, critical agency. It may serve the community well only by occasionally outraging it. And it is not easy to point out unpalatable truths while passing the hat."

THE DIALOGUE AND YOU

If you would like to be a part of the continuing work of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, and would like to receive all of the Center's publications, then you are invited to become a member of the Center.

Not only will your membership entitle you to receive *The Center Magazine* and all other Center publications, but it will help to insure that the Center's policy of free distribution to those who can best use the materials (but who do not have the necessary funds) can be continued.

By becoming a member of the Center, you will be supporting the only organization of its kind in the world.

You will be increasing the chances of democracy's survival by encouraging independent and responsible thought.

You will be an indispensable part of:

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... Unique Contribution to Democracy.



institutions are not harmed but are strengthened by continuing criticism and reappraisal.

THE DIALOGUE AND BASIC ISSUES

In an attempt to see the problems of our revolutionary age in the light of reason, the Center daily calls together its approximately two dozen Fellows in Residence for dialogue about a paper relevant to the Center's program.

Engaged in these dialogues are scientists, theologians, journalists, mathematicians, philosophers, politicians, novelists, military commentators, civil servants, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, judges, teachers—men and women from a wide variety of backgrounds. The Center has ignored the labels of "right wing" and "left wing." It has obtained the participation of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, secularists, men who call themselves "radicals" and others who regard themselves as "conservatives."

Among questions currently under examination at the Center are:

—How can the community of man in the new age control the surge of technology, for the sake of individual freedom and the general welfare?

—How can the community of man prevent a nuclear war, which could destroy civilization?

—How can the community of man provide a more abundant life for all, without crippling losses of individual liberties?

—How can the community of man open up the resources of mind and spirit to give meaning to human life at the highest level of its potential?

The cross-fertilization of thought which takes place at the Center as men of various backgrounds blend their singular understandings creates a wider comprehension of views.

Interaction of disciplines and specialized vocabularies broadens—of necessity—each participant's grasp of the topic under discussion. The flow of some 300 visitors each year enriches the dialogue and broadens the perspective. Thousands of letters from readers of Center publications and listeners to Center tapes have stimulated the staff to rethink many of their ideas.

Agreement is never the goal of the dialogue, but rather development of responsible ideas based upon valid experience and informed speculation.

The result is broader definition of problems and more comprehensive identification of alternatives facing citizens of a democratic society.

THE DIALOGUE AND CHANGE

Change throughout the world is taking place at an ever-faster rate, and the dialogue is a unique instrument for keeping the rational process abreast of that change.

This inherent affinity between the dialogue and change was expressed by a successful Los Angeles businessman, Harold Willens, who also is a Center board member:

"During the dialogue as the issue becomes illuminated by scrutiny of various points of view, the minds of many of the par-



ticipants will have, much more often than not, changed to some degree in the process.

"The point is crucial. Because it means that those who examine the basic issues confronting our society have to be able to accept the concept of change.

"Now, all of us are conservative in one area or another—to greater and to lesser degrees. But we are living in a world where enormous changes in population and technology require an acceptance of the facts and a willingness to investigate new methods of solving the problems these changes impose upon us.

"This means there is little room for such 'conservatism' in a discussion requiring that the participant, himself, change and adapt his thinking to his own increase in understanding.

"Those persons who do not recognize change, and/or are not willing to consider new ideas proposed as solutions to the problems imposed by change, are not the stuff of which productive discussions grow. And to this extent, this type of so-called 'conservative' is conspicuously absent. And he is absent by definition, for his contribution basically turns on the current conventional wisdom which is everywhere available in the mass media.

"One purpose of the Center is to give voice to those new ideas which are not yet a part of the conventional wisdom, which do not have easy access to the mass media and which (in the Center's judgment) should be presented to the public as a contribution to the discussion of the Free Society.

"I see dialogue, as tough and demanding as it is, as the only way to hammer out new political, social, and economic answers which must be found to meet our new dilemmas and which must be as new and ingenious as the scientific and technological discoveries we have made."

THE DIALOGUE AND PUBLIC OPINION

Once extensive analysis indicates that the subject at hand is a basic issue affecting democratic institutions, the Center seeks to widen the circles of discussion and broaden public awareness.

The Center's approach is uniquely effective.

Periodic convocations are widely publicized, the Center tapes are distributed in rapidly growing numbers and about 7,000,000 copies of some 175 different publications are circulating among influentials in the mainstream of our decision-making process: among leading editorial writers and columnists, television and radio commentators, political leaders and government officials, businessmen and union leaders, teachers, clergymen, students, lawyers and a wide variety of other interested citizens.

Center publications are in regular use in classrooms and in business, union and church educational programs, are often reproduced in whole or in part in newspapers and magazines of general circulation and have been used as the basis of network television programs. More than 500 universities are using Center publications and tape-recordings. Most publications promote sustained discussion in newspaper editorials and syndicated columns.

Most recently, a periodical—*The Center Magazine*, under the editorship of John Cogley, former *New York Times* religion editor, and former executive editor of *Commonweal*—has been added to the Center's list of publications. Appearing six times a year, this 100-page *Center Magazine* documents the continuing dialogue of the basic issues of our day.

All Center publications are distributed free of charge to Center members. The Center's mailing lists, based upon specific requests, are reviewed regularly to see that the publications are in actual use. Normally, single copies of the Center's publications are sent without charge to anyone who requests them; a modest charge is made for multiple copies. Requests for some publications have reached 100,000.

THE DIALOGUE AND TANGIBLE RESULTS

The Center is not an action group—yet it does obtain results.

As an educational institution with a tax-free status, the Center, by law, cannot solicit support for specific legislation. Nor does the Center make specific recommendations for governmental or private action.

However, as private individuals, many of those associated with the Center offer policy proposals which often are noted and discussed in Center publications. The Center examines all political views, including those which are militantly partisan, and appraises them in terms of basic issues. This dialogue, and the ideas generated by it, are available to any agency, public or private, which may find them useful.

Dissemination of the Center dialogue has resulted in important influence upon public policy. For example:

—More than 10 years ago, the Fund for the Republic established a Commission on Race and Housing, which issued reports and recommendations still being used as a basis for action in many cities and states.

—The Fund supported a Commission on the Rights, Liberties and Responsibilities of American Indians, which brought out the scandalous conditions under which the original Americans were struggling to survive and was a major contributor to progressive revisions in the federal government's Indian policies.

—The Fund made a study of black-listing in Hollywood, in

radio and television, which led the way in curbing this effort to impose a smothering conformity upon actors, writers and producers.

—One of the men who worked on the black-listing study, Michael Harrington, also observed the extent of poverty in the United States. He wrote a book, *The Other America*, which attracted the attention of the late President Kennedy and led to the current "war on poverty."

—The Center also was a leader in focusing attention on the impact of automation. Its booklet, "Cybernation: The Silent Conquest," stirred such discussion throughout the United States that the President appointed a special commission to examine the problem, which now is recognized as among the paramount challenges confronting our society.

—The Center has been in the forefront of creative thinking on the revolution in race relations—in conferences, broadcasts and pamphlets, ranging from "The Negro as an American" to "Civil Disobedience."

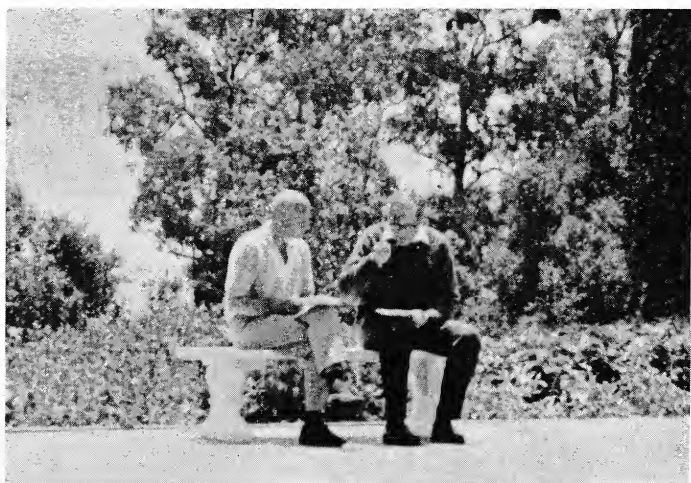
—The Center's first convocation on Pope John's encyclical "Pacem in Terris" brought together leaders from 21 nations and indirectly led to the address given by Pope Paul at the United Nations in October of 1965.

—The Center's second convocation brought together nearly 400 leaders from more than 70 nations—at a time of crisis (the Arab-Israeli war) when it was the only major forum for independent dialogue remaining open—and resulted in the first East Germany-West Germany discussions since World War II.

—Educators from 230 colleges and universities attended the Center's convocation on the role of the university in America, intended to stimulate a fresh appraisal of this vital institution. What was said became the subjects of television and radio programs, as well as numerous newspaper articles. The Center reported the convocation in its own magazine and published an "Occasional Paper" which was distributed to some 40,000 opinion-makers in America.

—A Center study of religious institutions, supported by a group of prominent theologians and laymen, began with the problem of interfaith tension among Protestants, Catholics and Jews. The resulting conferences and publications have been hailed by the religious press as having had a profound and lasting effect on the ecumenical movement.

—The trade union study provides another example of solid accomplishment. The Center staff, under the general direction of then President Clark Kerr of the University of California, one



Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

P.O. Box 4068
Santa Barbara, California 93103

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New York Office: 136 East 57th Street, New York 10022
Los Angeles Office: 205 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90212